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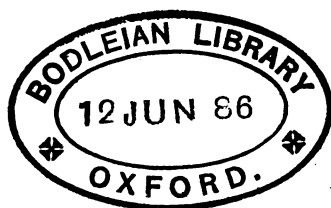
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UNWIN BROTHERS,  
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# JANUS ;

OR,

## The Double-faced Ministry.

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HER MAJESTY'S Government has failed. Its first object was to maintain the "Peace of Europe." The result of eighteen months of meddlesome, shifting, and inept diplomatic agony has been to bring all Europe to the verge of war.

The banners are unfurled. In the air of awakening spring the Crescent and the Cross wave and shimmer on silken webs ; the vernal sun gleams on swords unsheathed, and on the polished barrels of long-ranged rifles ; the clang of arms and the tramp of a million feet disturb the repose of Europe—for the question of centuries, grown to dimensions that appal the boldest mind, has come to the supreme issue. Race, religion, humanity, the infallible claims of justice, the resistless forces of civilisation—all these are hastening to occupy the ground which has been wasted, fouled, and ruined by the rankest evils of barbarity, of ignorance, of tyranny, of inhumanity, and of an infernal superstition.

Before this question Her Majesty's Ministers—one half generous and earnest, the other half sardonically politic and selfish—stand, watching the mysterious, awful play of the tremendous forces which are sweeping onward, charged with the fate of empires. With folded arms, as a shopman looks forth of his shop upon some whirling storm, and wonders what goods of his are on their way, they are asking themselves: "What interest of ours is in danger?" Behind them, it is true, is Christian England, offering up its prayers in thousands of temples to a God of justice, of love, of mercy, to dispense His blessings to all mankind; but according to this Ministry, representing these people, our prayers are for ourselves alone, and we are not troubled that others should be favoured with more than the dregs of the Divine bounty. If enlightenment, superior civilisation, a purer religion, a higher morality, and the knowledge gained of experience, that only by humane and generous government can even material human interests be amply fostered—if all this teaches only a "gospel of selfishness," and invokes no wider responsibility than the bounds of our own interests, then, indeed, is the "streak of silver sea" God's warrañt to a mean isolation, and we ought to dwell hereafter in proud retirement from the fraternity of nations.

But the noble task which they have had neither the nerve nor the principle to undertake, has fallen from their hands into those of a rival. Strange destiny! The leader in the crusade which is to clear Europe from the dying clutch of a decaying and insufferable barbarism is the autocrat of a half-civilised people,



possessed with the enthusiasm of a faith poor, and blind, and gross, but real in its intensity, and enlightening through all its mistiness. The least advanced of Christian nations meditates a crusade! The most powerful and intelligent of Christian peoples shuts up its sympathies, withholds its aid, ay! even offers its protest!

If we seek to know the meaning of this, we must take note of some singular phenomena. Jealousy of Russian aggrandisement, fears about our Indian Empire, an ancient tradition that in some measure the fate of Turkey is inextricably interwoven with the interests of England, indefensible arrogance of pretence to a maritime monopoly in the Mediterranean, have influenced the councils of Her Majesty's Ministers within. Without, we have witnessed the play of a large-hearted, a righteous, and, I believe, in all the vast interests of humanity in which the stability and prosperity of the British Empire are so concerned, a *politic* enthusiasm, demanding that the chronic causes of disturbance to European peace, the incurable waste of human life and rich opportunity in the Turkish provinces of Europe, should once and for all, and by the help of England, be abolished. Again we have seen the curb upon this generous feeling of a narrow and blinded bigotry. The "Peace at any Price" politicians, with their non-intervention fallacy, have restrained the Liberal leaders, and have played into the hands of those who are deliberately driving the country on to a contest more inglorious, if not more fatal to its highest interests. And lastly, we have had a new development of philanthropy. Its temple is Stafford House.

It has now become the fashion of humanitarian Christianity, in certain aristocratic quarters, where, we must suppose, it has attained a hot-house perfection, to entertain feelings so delicate and to be so kindly in its sentiment, so broad in its sympathies, as to be willing to draw to its compassionate breast, with maudlin tears, the robber, the murderer, the violator, the most inhuman examples of humanity. It weeps over their woes. It subscribes to lessen the pangs of their righteous punishments. It offers its help in the resistance of the criminal against the inflamed vengeance of mankind. It is of the sort that would have sewn up the bowels of Judas Iscariot from motives of sublimest pity.

At the head of these morbid sentimentalists, beseeching fair play for the convicted felon in the very act of escaping from justice, and of committing more infamous crimes, the Government of England, half-angry with the convict, half-afraid of the executioner, still feebly rubs its hands together, and seems to wish that the culprit may escape, the executioner be worsted. Either unable to comprehend or unwilling to own to themselves the vastness, urgency, and power of the forces at work, and of the issues to be solved ; regarding the whole matter within the narrow bounds and relations of their own national shop, they have allowed the current to flow until its volume and momentum are past all efforts of restraint.

At the tail of these saints of the new era may be seen a committee of Whig aristocrats, uniting the godly purposes of charity with the worldly objects of political manœuvre. These noblemen and gentlemen, whose

united incomes I daresay amount to some two or three millions a year, display the depth and intensity of their sympathies, and their keen sense of humour, by subscribing a few thousands of pounds to send blankets and bottles of physic as a solace for a quarter of a million of shivering ruffians who, slaves at once of a vicious Government and an inhuman religion, are engaged in affirming their right, as a matter of national independence, to forswear their engagements, to break their treaties, to mock their own laws and declarations, to live in daily defiance of all the principles of justice, morality, and humanity, and, with awful proofs of their infernal spirit, to vindicate their freedom from the oversight or control of outraged civilisation.

Verily we are living in an age of strange and monstrous births! An England at once generously Christian and selfishly Mahomedan. A Conservatism at once liberal and bigoted. A foreign policy at once mean and spirited. A Ministry which includes a Beaconsfield and a Salisbury. A House of Commons in which a philanthropic Hanbury is a Philo-Turk, and a Kenealy expresses, amidst rapturous plaudits, the opinions of Tory gentlemen. An age in which Mr. Butler-Johnston is a prophet. A popular Government in a reformed Parliament, which at the moment when the British people are bent upon following a path of honour, dignity, and righteousness, is pursuing a policy of the meanest and narrowest selfishness. And lastly, an era in which the philosophical and moral imposture called Positivism stands shoulder to

shoulder with the ancient organisation of an Infallible Papacy, and with the silly and brutal fanaticism of the False Prophet. Surely these are portentous phenomena, which in themselves ought to rouse to anxiety and terror any man who cares for the future of his race.

On the eve of a war which, in spite of the efforts of Her Majesty's Government, who from time to time have taken cardinal action in momentous junctures, and who, by their own affirmation, have now and again in such junctures held the leading strings of Europe, Ministers stand before the people of disappointed Britain to give account of their stewardship. It is truly a sorry record!

If to checkmate every move of Europe towards an effective and permanent solution—if to bolster up the Ottoman Porte in a fatal and indomitable obstinacy—if to defeat the generous indignation of the English people—if, for the purpose of gaining a temporary peace, to work for any settlement, however unmanly and demeaning to European diplomacy—if to be at once obstructive and complaisant, at once imbecile and strong, at once sympathetically earnest at home and cynically indifferent and selfish abroad—if to protest to England a policy dictated by the highest motives of humanity and Christian responsibility, and to exhibit abroad the renowned selfishness of a nation of shopkeepers—if to do all this at one and the same time is an achievement whereof a Tory Government may be proud, let all the world arise and bow down and congratulate them on their indisputable success.

The double-faced idol which the Romans called Janus, giving countenance on opposite sides to peace and war, was a harmless if a monstrous ideal. His duplicity was evident, candid, physical. It may also be said that he threw all his force into one side or the other. He was not meant to embody or to patronise a shameless neutrality. By an aggregation of Conservative atoms we have created in modern England a flesh-and-blood Janus. It also has two faces. The one is the face of Beaconsfield ; the other of Salisbury. It has another double characteristic : its voice is the voice of Jacob, its hands are the hands of Esau. Its nature is also duplex : it is at once gushing and cynical. Its features change with the changes of public feeling. Its policy is chameleonic. And yet through it all it remains ONE !

This is a grave and awkward specimen of political art. The world is not so much surprised to find Lords Beaconsfield and Salisbury, Mr. Hardy and Sir Stafford Northcote, or Mr. Ward Hunt and Lord Carnarvon in the same Cabinet so long as they agree in giving to the world identical opinions, but it wonders, when they can be shown absolutely to disagree with one another, by what bands they are held together. If Lord Salisbury believes, as no doubt he does with all his heart, everything he said at Constantinople, it becomes a painful problem to conceive of any basis on which he can stand alongside of Lord Beaconsfield on the Eastern Question. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer can go to Yorkshire to shed tears over Bulgarian sorrows and own the responsibility of Eng-

land, on some great occasions, to act not wholly in regard to her own material interests, while the Secretary of State for War disowns generous sentiments, and boldly admits it to be in his view the duty of every state first and always and only to look out for itself, the Cabinet which holds both these distinguished gentlemen is something more than curious—it is a political monstrosity. And such a political monstrosity is a political danger ; for it implies a degeneration at once of our national statesmanship and of the popular morality.

On the eve of the war, now inevitable, I ask the people of England to look at the rights and wrongs of it ; to examine into the meaning of it ; to weigh the cause of it ; to find out who is responsible for it ; and to say what they will do in it. Sweep out of your minds all the perilous rubbish of diplomatic confusion worse confounded, of hostile party declamation, of interested lies, and look straight at the rights and wrongs of the existing situation.

And consider well the strange part that has been played by Her Majesty's Government. If it shall appear that they are in no small degree chargeable with the fatal result ; that by weakness, or indecision, or obstinacy, they have stultified the intentions of England : if the course they are now pursuing shall appear to be drawing them on to yet more perilous and obnoxious conclusions ; they must be judged, not by their personally high and unimpeachable character, but by what they professed, what they attempted, what they did, and what they may do.

It is absolutely necessary—for people in the rapid shifting of events are apt insensibly to lose their foothold on the principles and facts of the past, and so to shift their ground—to go back and glance at the origin of the present state of things. For vicious efforts are now being made to distort the public vision of the facts, and to charge Russia with a long and deliberate intrigue. It might be enough in answer to quote the words of the modern Janus. But it has spoken in one sense and acted in another. At one moment it declared that Russia was playing a candid and honourable part ; at another moment it taunted and insulted the same Russia with ungenerous suspicions. In the latest negotiations, the most critical of all, this jealousy came out in a conspicuous declaration.

Now if anything is certain among the multitudinous uncertainties of this marvellous episode of human history, it is that Russia, as a nation, did not foment the disturbances which have at length brought her armies into the field ; that she honestly and diligently sought some safe and honourable way to appease them ; and that all her desires and all her interests were involved in peace. If, therefore, peace has not been attained, it is due to influences beyond the control of Russia. Were we to admit that Russia could no longer endure the misgovernment of the Porte, which excited the sympathies of her people, and that she was acting upon that alone, would it lie in our mouth to rebuke or to hinder her ? Let us go afield a bit, and vindicate our own international interference ; for instance, our Dahomey expeditions, our Indian annexations. Let

us admit some charitable compunction for the Boers, who, beside the Turk, are mere babies in cruelty and wrongdoing, and who, if the Gospel according to Butler-Johnston were true, would have a proper right, without regard to the peace or well-being of the neighbouring colonies, to continue to wrong and plunder the natives within and on their borders. In fact, the evidence is clear that exceptional harshness in an exceptional time struck the spark of the conflagration.\* And then there came in other forces. For let it be remembered how, to Russia, the misgovernment of Turkey is something more than a mere matter of ambitious opportunity. It involves the internal order of the Russian nation—perhaps may concern the very existence of the Government.

First, then, there is not a shadow of a doubt that from first to last, in Europe and everywhere else, the government of the Turk has been misrule, aggravated by tyranny and stained by crime. It was in Europe especially a government of ancient and depressed peoples by an armed camp of overbearing, extortionate, unprincipled tyrants, disguised as gentlemen, and trained to a religion of blood and force. It is of no consequence whether the suffering people were Christians or were not. They were low in the scale of the higher civilisation, but they were the superiors of their oppressors in all those qualities of business

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\* *Vide* Letter of a Consul, *Times*, December 15th, 1875, for a remarkably clear and able and specific history of the origin and course of the disturbances. And compare this with the accounts of Her Britannic Majesty's Consul, Holmes.



energy, industry, peacefulness, family devotion, and mutual helpfulness, which are essential to the development of civilised communities. Round the galled neck of these peoples, and pressing on their bending shoulders, were the legs and the weight of that Old Man of the Mountain—Mahomedan rule. The dreadful ghoul of a hopeless slavery and repression lay upon their breasts. The peasant sowed his seed in sorrow, and without hope; for he knew that when glorious summer and wealthy soil had joined to bring up the smiling harvest, its choicest sheaves should be garnered for plundering publicans and extortionate landlords. If he possessed a cow, a horse, a flock or herd, the reward, perhaps, of painful industry and of ignoble but politic cunning, he rose each day with beating heart to count his hoofs, and retired to rest too thankful to feel that for one day more no rapacious governor, or officer, or zaptieh had driven off the pride of his stock. In his younger days he married, and brought home his wife with sober and timorous rejoicings. Daily when he went forth to work, he parted from her as from one he might not see again; or, as he toiled through the long hours, if from the hamlet he heard the shriek of a woman, his heart was thrilled with the terrible fear that some drunken policeman, some lustful Mussulman, had violated the sanctity of his home and rapt away the glory of her womanly virtue. And later on, when, after years of affectionate care, his son grew up to be the pride of his heart or his daughter matured to womanhood, in proportion to their grace, their beauty, their youthful charm and vigour did he

tremble whenever he left them, lest they should be snatched away for the vile gratification of brutal passion, or to become the victims of a more general and irreparable outrage. He stood like a slave before the passing Turk ; he bore without revenge the stroke of whip, or stick, or flattened sabre ; he skulked to his labour like a beaten hound ; he enjoyed the products of his trade, or his work, or his skill, or his knowledge, hardly earned, as the shivering dog which while he picks his bone watches on every side for the angry blow.

O you people of England, will you forget these things ? Will you think and try to realise to yourselves, What must have come of centuries of this sort of life ? What an extinguishing of manliness, what a death of hope, what a low mean cunning, what a narrow nature, what pent-up passions and ignoble serfdom !

Contrast *our* harvesting and theirs ! The ripened grain waves in a golden sea under the westering sun. Or here over the undulating landscape the rich-hued cones dangle in clusters from the even lines of poles. Or here again, the ground thick carpeted with broad, green, juicy foliage, tells of globes of succulent food ripening below for man and beast. Or the rich orchards glow with their blooming spheres of fruit. From all parts come joyous harvesters, old and young :—

“ Brown Exercise delights to hear,  
And Labour shakes her rustic spear.”

Wielded by sinewy arm the bright scythe hums and

sweeps through the ranks of golden reeds, or busy fingers swathe the sheaves, or pick the yellow cones, or gather the ambrosial fruit. The products of quiet and protected culture are safely gathered in. Then in ten thousand churches the grateful peasants crowd to offer up their thanksgivings, untinged by fear, or blood, or violence, or sorrow. And priest and people turn with hope to the darkling hours and shortened days of winter, assured that next year shall bring them again to a hopeful sowing-time and a peaceful harvest.

But there, under the wicked rule of the Mussulman, they do not even sow in tears to reap in joy. With listless fatalism they cast into the ground the seeds of a growth which they know as they watch it shall minister most, not to their wants or wealth, but to the greed of unrighteous government and to official plunder. Robbery, outrage, blood, rapine, absolute wrong, false justice, the want of all that can make life enjoyable, or even tolerable : this is the fate of millions of people within the circle of "the concert" of Christian Europe!

If the people thus affected had been mere Negroes, worshippers of a hideous Fetish, the Christian nations of Europe could not have been indifferent bystanders of the brutal history. Sympathy at least must have been expressed and felt, as it was expressed and felt with regard to the mitigated sorrows of the African slave in the Southern States of America—as it is now exhibited at great expense on the West Coast of Africa and elsewhere.

But the sufferers were not Negroes. They were of one blood with no small proportion of the inhabitants of great nations whose territories bordered on their sorrow-stricken plains. It was simply impossible that the sympathies of race, of blood, of religion, should fail to excite on behalf of these martyrs of a protracted wrong the ardent feelings of surrounding nations. If that feeling did not take effect in indignant and vigorous action against the relentless tyrants, it was because nations further off and less involved either on international or interested grounds, chose to manifest a jealousy of these sympathies, lest they should involve the unity of a vast, powerful, semi-barbarous race, and menace the balance of power in Europe. The spirit of this race sympathy had again and again broken out, and shown itself in efforts to relieve the Christians of Turkey from the unbearable load ; but it was checked whenever it threatened the supremacy of the Mahomedan rule. And it was checked because Europe believed that behind the gushing sympathies of a kindred people, there were the selfish ambitions of an Imperial dynasty and of national ambition.

What England had to do with all this, it will puzzle any honest man to discover. The territories concerned are remote from hers. By a curious chance, there is hardly any part of the world in which great territorial changes could take place with less menace to her Imperial interests. Turkey does not stand in the way to India. The fate of Constantinople we have no moral claim to dictate. We shall see directly what an arrogant and perilous pretence is put forth by the head of

the Ministry to our sublime right of interference in this matter.

But suppose these troubles have been fomented by Russia, let us ask, By what Russia? By Russia Imperial or Russia Sclavic? Answer that question; and in order to form a correct judgment, candidly examine the facts, conditions, circumstances, before September, 1875, and since, and now. No one denies that the Emperor and a large party in Russia sincerely, even ardently, longed for peace. There is no question that every Russian interested in property, or animated by patriotic feeling, thought peace to be essential to the national well-being. No one in Russia could rejoice in war, still less propose it, unless he was persuaded of one of two things: either that war, with all its sacrifices, was safer than any alternative—for instance, peace with a dastardly indifference to Sclavic wrongs; or that some great race or national interest, which rose high above every other consideration of present peace, prosperity, fortune, or national government, compelled his people to the solution of some tremendous problem.

If the situation of Russia and the disposition of her leaders was such as I have described,—and it could not have been otherwise,—if her condition forbade precipitation, then it was not Russia Imperial, nor even Russia national, that could have instigated the disturbances in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The facts are all to the contrary. Her Government was not ready for the raising of this vital and transcendent issue. Was it even Russia Sclavic? Why, everybody

knows that the great Sclavic secret society, the Omladina, which terrified Lord Beaconsfield into a bizarre solemnity, flourished most among the Slaves of Austria and Servia. Nor is it wonderful that *they* were active, eager, irreconcilable. They lived nearest to their suffering brethren. The echo of agonising cries came over their borders. The reality of wrong was made manifest by fugitives stripped, wounded, and outraged, who carried on their persons the indelible records of their sufferings. The argument is worn out by this time, but it needs again to be repeated, the weeds of conspiracy will not grow in the soil of good government. Discontent is not a product of righteous economy. And as a fact, we know by the testimony of many witnesses—nay, by the admissions of the Turks themselves—that there were in Bosnia and the Herzegovina wrongs so flagrant and obstinate as to defy both the regulations and the forces of Government, and to leave to the unhappy sufferers not the faintest promise, not the slightest hope of reform. I have described the terrible reality in colours, alas! not as intense as the truth. I have called to mind the fortunate contrast of our own experiences; and one may well ask how long, before the very face and in the very middle of witnessing Christendom, were horrors so revolting, to be permitted to remain unredressed?

But if it be owned that the outbreak was precipitated by the intrigues or suggestions of Sclavic committees? This implies conditions and sets upon the stage elements of which we can hardly measure the

extent, or predict the effects. These are forces that confound the wisdom of statesmen and the might of kings. These are ideas which live in men's hearts and will not perish with their bodies. If any statesman in Europe, or any nation, or any group of nations imagine that the inborn enthusiasm of Slavonic destiny which possesses that vast race can be drilled, fettered, confined, repressed for any length of time, then it needs another Hardicanute to come back from the dead to teach such dogmatists that no mere man can appease or command the omnipotent ocean.

The meaning, therefore, of the uprising was this, that there existed in Turkey intolerable evils, inflicted by a foreign horde of armed conquerors on a subject people, and that the subject people were allies by blood to a great race holding no small proportion of power in two of the proudest nations of Europe. Will France, think you, ever look unmoved upon the mitigated sorrows of the Alsatians and Lorrainese? Would Germany stand by inactive, were Russia to oppress, to wrong, to torture the Germans of the Baltic provinces? And shall Europe demand of Austrian and Russian Slaves a cruel self-control in the face of tyranny so hideous and unmitigated as that of the Turks?

But, turning from mere Slavonic sympathy, let us come to the subject of Slavonic ambition. It is, as yet, an utterly undeveloped, unrecognised force. But, thanks to Her Majesty's Government, it is being drawn to a head by opposition. It will grow towards a more perfect system under the fostering hand of

those who have during the last eighteen months devised the policy of Europe. The mere ambition of Imperial Russia, as I have demonstrated, could not have been the originating force of the mighty movements now begun. It was the interest of the dynasty to postpone the day when the string should be pulled and the vast galleon of Slavonic unity should be launched upon the waters of destiny. Had other nations aided the dynasty to put off that fatal day there might have been created in Northern Turkey a series of self-governing peoples, whose long development under the protectorate of Europe would have relegated to a distant posterity the solution of the Slavonic problem. But meddling fools or selfish tacticians have intervened, and have driven the Russian Government in desperation to take the lead in the inevitable march. O unhappy fate, which sets an autocratic and pontifical supremacy in the fore-front of a popular agitation—which embarks it on the waves of a torrent, rushing prodigious from the vast reservoir of pent-up national ambitions and uncontrollable sympathies of race!

The Eastern Question is no longer a question of Turkey ; it is a question also of free government for Russia, of Slavonic union of all Slavic peoples, and lastly, of the natural decay and disintegration of Mahomedan power. This, then, is the meaning of it.

A great statesman like Canning, or Mr. Gladstone, had he been at the head of affairs, would have apprehended the conditions, would have properly gauged the forces that were at work, and would have recognised



the fact that the time Lord Palmerston had scored with infallible sagacity had come. And realising the interest of humanity, of Europe, of England, in the just settlement of the question, he would have approached and treated it with judicious awe, but with commanding courage. But, unhappily, the face that Britain turned to Europe was not the face of a Jupiter, —it was the countenance of a Sphinx.

If we come to weigh the immediate causes of the war, we shall be convinced, the more we study the history, that it has been the natural and inevitable result of the do-nothing, dog-in-the-manger policy of Her Majesty's Government. When the disturbances originally broke out, and Lord Derby heard of them, he, as an evidence of his "impartiality" (!), called upon the Turks to put their petticoats on the sparks and stifle them as soon as possible. In one of his latest speeches\* he reiterated *his regret that they had not done so*. It is significant of the bias of his mind. It comports with the present tone of the Under-Secretary of State in the House of Commons regarding the oppressed Christians. True, such repression meant Bulgarian massacres in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but Europe might never have heard of them. But there is a LORD above Lord Derby, and He ordered it otherwise. The wrong was rank : it smelt to heaven.

The action of the Powers most interested was quick and politic. When they found that the Porte could not deal with the insurrection, which in the beginning was one equally of Greek and Catholic Christians, they

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\* House of Lords, February 8th, 1877.

proposed action. It was very slight, namely, to send their Consuls to the scene of the disturbances. But Lord Derby outwent the Turks themselves, and objected. However, the Consuls were sent. They saw the rebels. They told them to lay down their arms and return to their homes, the cause of the rising being that fugitives of the same sort coming back to their village had been brutally set upon and murdered. It was hard counsel to give to men surrounded by armed ruffians, but the peace of Europe required the martyrdom. The men refused to see the force of it. They asked for securities. As for the Turks, they took advantage of the meeting with the Consuls to try to circumvent and massacre the leaders of the refugees!

The Andrassy Note followed, with its suggestive protest. To that the Government objected, though Count Andrassy warned them in language more than earnest, that unless there was union in the pressure put upon the Porte, Servia and Montenegro would declare war. That Note was in vain. The Turk swallowed the pill, brought out a new Firman, took his coffee and smoked his chibouque, and waited to see what would come of it.

All the Powers, except England, had seen by this time that the only way to move the Porte was to resort to a prescription in daily use by policemen—to employ “*des mesures efficaces*.” He was so hopeless and helpless a malefactor that the only way to save him was to force him to save himself. Germany, Austria, and Russia drew up a Memorandum, which, dating from Berlin, had in it much of the frank vigour of Bismarck.

It brushed away everything but the facts. It stood upon the moral right of Europe to abate a nuisance—now become truly “infernal.” It proposed to tell the Porte, in the name of Europe, that, if it did not fulfil its repeated engagements to the Christians and assurances to the Powers, they would take the matter in hand. The three Powers concerned had undoubtedly considered the situation—had arranged for contingencies—were ready for them.

It was then that our Ministry, which had been dawdling along in a listless sort of way, woke up. They flatly refused the Berlin Memorandum. They insisted on the inviolability of the Treaty of Paris. They firmly repelled the idea of interfering with the internal affairs of Turkey. They followed this up very soon after by the most powerful naval demonstration of the century. Up to that time there was hope of quelling the disturbance. Up to that time Turkey was frightened and irresolute. From that moment she took courage, and began to show her teeth. Sir Henry Elliot wrote, in a flush of proud enthusiasm (it was on the 31st May, just after Abdul Aziz had been deposed) :—

“There is at this moment, among all classes, both of Turks and Christians,\* an enthusiasm for Great Britain which puts Her Majesty’s Government in a position in this country which they have not held for many years.”

Up to this time Her Majesty’s Ministers had been watching events as a merchant watches the weather, with special reference to the ship he has at

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\* What “Christians?”

sea. You can find no indication in Lord Derby's correspondence, or in his speeches, that his consideration had gone beyond the directly practical point of saving Turkey, at all hazards, from an intervention which might compromise her independence ; or that he recognised how prodigious a matter had come upon his hands. Least of all does he appear to have fully appreciated the most important fact that there were internal causes in Turkey which were hastening on its decay. Nay, even the deposition and murder of one Sultan, the elevation, lunacy, and deposition of another, does not appear to have shaken the confidence of our Philo-Turkish Ministers in a future for Turkey. Had Lord Derby possessed more imagination, or Lord Beaconsfield more sympathy, humanity and statesman-like ability, they might have been able to engage cordially with the statesmen of the Continent in some general scheme of action, which would have satisfied at once the just sentiment of Europe, the irrepressible sympathies of the Slaves, without endangering the territorial suzerainty of the Porte. But their policy was narrow, suspicious, and selfish. Of their oft-asserted anxiety for the security of the unhappy Christians, an anxiety which, in the glow of public opinion, afterwards rose from zero to blood heat—that is, from Disraeli to Salisbury—there is not in the Ministerial records, before the Berlin Memorandum, any evidence of the slightest value. Even the activity of other states was treated with suspicion and resentment. “I have,” said Lord Derby, writing to Sir Henry Elliot,—

“I have to point out to your Excellency that H.M. Government

have, since the outbreak of the insurrection in Bosnia and the Herzegovina, *deprecated the diplomatic intervention of other Powers in the affairs of the Ottoman Empire.*" \*

Later on, it became necessary for Her Majesty's Government to change their tone. With the above passage staring them in the face, the Chancellor of the Exchequer declared that at, and before, the time when these words were sent to Constantinople, "we were in cordial co-operation with Russia, as well as the other Powers of Europe!" †

The action of Her Majesty's Government, as we have seen, was guided and based on the "traditional policy of England." But before the whirlwind of public opinion the Ministry lightened their ship. They have, as we shall see directly, since stopped to pick up again that which they had thrown away.

Not long after, a wail went through Europe—a terrible cry—which thrilled all men's hearts with horror. It startled diplomacy out of its propriety. The Porte had taken Lord Derby's advice‡ in a manner that stirred his deepest and most honest indignation. Bulgaria, like Glencoe or St. Bartho-

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\* May 19th, 1876.

† "It is supposed we are hampered by some traditional policy. It is supposed that we are hampered by an unworthy jealousy of Russia. I deny both these assertions. Why, up to the time of these unfortunate transactions we were in cordial co-operation with Russia, as well as the other Powers of Europe."

‡ Lord Derby to Sir H. Elliot, Turkey, No. 2, 1876, p. 6: "At the same time, Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that the Turkish Government should rely on their own resources to suppress the insurrection, and should deal with it as a local outbreak of disorder, rather than give international importance to it by appealing for support to other Powers."

lomew, will never be mentioned in history without a shudder. Serbia and Montenegro had gone to war; Russian volunteers were pouring into the provinces; the Muscovite Government was in a strait betwixt its own desires for peace and the Sclavic enthusiasm of its people. When the news of the Bulgarian massacres was spread through Russia the sympathy became uncontrollable. We know what it was in England.

Her Majesty's Government, who now aver that they have always consistently put forth their efforts for good government in Turkey, that they were always in sympathy with desires to secure the safety of the Christian as well as the Mahomedan population, continued to pursue a policy of suspicion and isolation.\* On the 12th of June last year, Count Schouvaloff had a conversation with Lord Derby. He insisted on the importance, the necessity, of united action. He was always giving assurances of the good faith of Russia. And in a desperate and touching appeal to the Foreign Minister, he said:—

“It would be desirable to know what was the solution of the difficulty which England desired to see adopted? *What was the drift of English policy?* Until that was known to his Government,

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\* The Duc Decazes in speaking to Mr. Adams, our Minister (*tenens*) at Paris: “He declared that for his part he could not but consider that if England stood aloof at this momentous crisis, it would be ‘a public calamity for Europe.’” (May 22, 1876, No. 3, 1876, p. 187.) “He intended, he said, to wait, solely in the hope that Her Majesty's Government might reconsider their decision, and that England might, after all, renounce her present isolation, and thus a concert of the Six Powers might be obtained.”—*Ib.* 187-8.

united action was impossible, however much other Powers might desire it."

He might as well have put the question to the moon. The face that was opposite to him was quite as impassive. The Government obviously had nothing worthy of the name of "policy." Had they really continued to follow a line of energetic protest against interference and backed up their principles by action, they would have been entitled to respect. But their hope at that time—judging by their acts and words—was to keep a ring while the Turk settled it with the Christians. Their determination was, if Turkey were menaced by other nations, to stand to her side, in vindication of the alleged "interests of England." The adjuration to our Government of Counts Schouvaloff and Andrassy at and before this time, to declare frankly what it wanted, are to my mind the most significant, the most humiliating comments on either the ineptitude or the disingenousness of our Ministers. It proves conclusively the truth of the Duke of Argyll's *dictum*, "They were the drag upon Europe."

Now, let us not overlook the fact, that this so-called policy of "non-intervention" was not that policy of "strict neutrality" which Lord Derby assured a deputation on the 16th of July, 1876, the Government was pursuing.\* It was practically a policy of support to

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\* "I have no hesitation in telling you, as regards the material part of the question—the conclusion to which you come—namely, your desire that the Government should observe a policy of strict neutrality, except when it may be able to interpose its friendly offices to hasten the close of the complication; I say, as regards that expression of opinion, your feeling is absolutely and entirely mine."

Turkey. It was a policy which protected the Porte from the moral weight of the Andrassy Note—the weight which cordial unanimity would have given to it. It was a policy which saved the Porte from the material menace of the Berlin Memorandum. I cannot do Her Majesty's Ministry the injustice to suppose that they do not see the bearing or the effect of their own acts, yet it is impossible to reconcile the known facts of the history of their negotiations with this assertion of Lord Derby, or with the gushing professions of other Ministers. The Porte stood in the position of a culprit before Europe. He had broken his engagements. He was living in open defiance of humanity and justice. He confessed his own sins.\* "Strict neutrality" would have left him to his punishment. "Strict neutrality" would not have worked ceaselessly to save him from the consequences of his misrule. The country, disgusted with the Ministry for its obstructive selfishness and too obvious sympathy with the Porte, demanded that it should at any risk leave him to the fate he deserved, and Lord Derby's words above quoted

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\* In the Imperial Firman, 1875, the Sultan was made to say: "It is not the less true that the causes which produce trouble *among peaceable populations* are in a great measure due to the *unseemly conduct of some incapable officials*, and *particularly to the exactions to which the avaricious farmers of taxes lend themselves*. His Imperial Majesty therefore orders that the *Governors, &c.*, as well as all the other authorities, *receive formal instructions to abstain entirely from the acts in question*, and also to *avoid the sentencing of persons to heavier punishments than the law prescribes, or to illegal imprisonments.*" Was it not a misnomer to call that "a Government" which could issue such an order as this?



helped to satisfy for the moment the rising feeling of the nation. I defy anyone to disprove this latter assertion; and I say that if the Foreign Minister attached to the words "strict neutrality" a meaning different from the plain and open intention of the memorial, he was bound to have supplied his own definition. Lord Beaconsfield, at Aylesbury, so late as on the 20th September, described more correctly the real bases of the policy of Her Majesty's Government. *It was to secure British interests—it was to maintain inviolate the integrity and independence of the Turkish Empire.* This was a policy of "strict neutrality!" On the 25th May Lord Derby had impliedly promised the Turk our "moral support."\*

Then came a period, it was the second period of political metempsychosis, which I hardly like to venture to describe. The point of departure was Lord Derby's speech at the Foreign Office. It was a time when an important change came over the spirit, the tone, the language of the Ministry, with one remarkable exception. The feeling in the country was tremendous. The resolution of the people to cut themselves loose from the infamy of sustaining, whether by moral or material means, the intolerable Government of the Porte, was overpowering. Lord Derby himself, writing to Sir Henry Elliot, described the public feeling to be so extreme that Her Majesty's Government might be unable even to act up to the obligations of treaties. Ministers and supporters of the Govern-

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\* *Vide post.*

ment went about the country throwing promises like oil upon the angry waters. They vowed that the Bulgarian atrocities should be both atoned for and avenged.

"These unfortunate Bulgarians," said Lord Derby to a deputation of working men,\* "have no doubt a right to such reparation as it is now possible to make. *They have also the undoubted right to the signal, conspicuous, and exemplary punishment of those who have been the offenders, and, I think, they may all fairly claim, in one manner or the other, that we should take steps such as will prevent the recurrence of similar actions.*"

This was a period of gush. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Carnarvon, the Home Secretary, and Lord Derby vied with each other in the profuseness of their pledges, the warmth of their sympathies, the enthusiasm of their spirit. Let anyone turn to the Appendix,† and read the extraordinary, nay, the humiliating record. An excited meeting was held in the City of London. Lord Mayor Cotton and many other Conservatives went up to Lord Derby. "The feeling of the (Guildhall) meeting," said the Lord Mayor, a Conservative Member of Parliament, "was very strong indeed, and *went to show that the old foreign policy of England was no longer tenable.*" On that the Foreign Secretary drew a picture of the broad and humane objects of Her Majesty's Ministers. He allowed the people of England to suppose that these were now the primary aims of British policy—to be made secondary to the old traditions of his office:—

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\* September 11, 1876.

† Appendices B. and C.

*"Equal treatment to Mahomedan and Christian; better administration for both; security for life and property; effectual guarantees against a repetition of such outrages as those which all Europe has seen with so much disgust—these are practical objects, and for these objects we shall labour."*

Accordingly, a violent and peremptory despatch was written to the Porte, and was deemed to be a document of such high importance as to be worthy of a special mention in the Queen's Speech. Better never to have mentioned it! It is one of the most inept and dishonouring episodes in our diplomacy. The outrages of Bulgaria remain still unredressed. The most conspicuous and ruffianly criminals still go at large. And Her Majesty's Ministry, which assumed such a threatening front, has failed to ratify the proud boast of the Chancellor of the Exchequer: *"This one thing I hope we shall never do! We shall never use language which we are not, at all events, prepared to support."*

But flagrant as is the fact that during this period this modern Janus turned its beaming face of benevolent enthusiasm upon England, instead of the "grave and stern decorum of the countenance it wore" toward Europe: incontestable as it is that they had changed their aims under the pressure of public opinion, they reduplicate duplicity! They positively deny that any change of principle took place. Lord Derby, with vehemence, repudiated the impeachment.\* He said:—

"The noble Earl [Lord Granville] says we have changed our policy in deference to agitation out of doors; and he says he approves our later policy, implying that he disapproved our earlier

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\* House of Lords, Feb. 8, 1877.

policy. . . If the noble Earl means that, the circumstances being the same, we have pursued different policies, I say the imputation is unfounded ; but if he only means that, the circumstances being different, we have in some degree altered our course of action to meet those altered conditions, that seems to me reasonable."

Now it must be clear to anyone that, by accident or design, the Foreign Minister's reply is not ingenuous. A policy is a line of conduct pursued on certain cardinal principles : and when you impute to any person "a change of policy," you imply an alteration of the ideas or rules upon which he has been founding his action. These are not the changes which come of a change of circumstances—they are changes in his motive and in the aims which he set before him. After the review we have made of the facts, it is enough for us to say in answer to Lord Derby, "If you did not change your policy between January and August, and August and December, 1876, the words of responsible colleagues, and your own acts and words, led the people of England to believe you had done so ; and if you still insist that there was in reality no change, except such as arose out of changing circumstances, the alternative deduction is worse than the charge you repel !" This is a very grave matter. It most seriously concerns the honour and character of the Government. The solemn declarations of their intentions made in the autumn by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Home Secretary, Lord Carnarvon, of their determination that the state of things in Turkey should cease, that effectual guarantees should be taken, *assured the country of a practical resolution to insist upon that which was demanded.* But the Ministry now

stand convicted on their own confession. They were bound either to fulfil their undertakings or not to stand in the way of their fulfilment. The pledges they made to the English public were definite and strong. Now, Lord Derby states that they never meant to carry out their pledges at the expense of Turkish independence. He confesses that the Ministry rejected the Berlin Memorandum because it proposed, in the last resort, those very "efficacious measures" which were promised by Lord Carnarvon and Sir Stafford Northcote. He slipped out of the Protocol for the same reasons. He makes the singular admission that they rejected the idea because it probably might have involved us in a war "inconsistent with justice." Inconsistent with justice! A war which enforced on a profligate, a vicious, an impotent Government conditions of righteous rule, "inconsistent with justice!"

Again—to look at their answers, and to look at their action—he says,—

"When we went into the Conference, we told Europe then, as I think it was our bounden duty to do, that we would not take upon ourselves to enforce its decision by the use of arms, although if the Porte refused to follow our advice we should not hold ourselves bound to protect it."

All this would appear to show that Lord Derby was candid in his assertion: THE POLICY OF HER MAJESTY'S MINISTERS HAD NEVER CHANGED. It was still, and always had been, the Chauvinism of Lord Beaconsfield. Its basis always was, that it would be an "injustice" to interfere with Ottoman tyranny—which is hidden under the euphemisms of "independence and integrity." Its original suggestions to the

Porte to deal with the insurgents without foreign interference having been followed out to the letter in Bulgaria, external patronage and protection became impossible ; but Turkey knew all along—was in fact positively assured !—that under no circumstances was our strong language to be backed by strong acts, and she was simply asked to rely no more on—the *moral support of England*. If she still clings to the belief that *the material aid* of England would not be wanting to her in an hour of dire extremity, one feels that there is, in the Protocol negotiations, the confessions of Lord Derby, the language of Lord Beaconsfield and Mr. Hardy, the tone of Mr. Bourke's references to atrocities still daily happening, nothing which is inconsistent with the avowed Ottoman belief—the policy of England has not changed. Nay, we are the first of European nations to send back to this infamous and dishonoured Government, which has equally declined to listen to our advice or to regard our threats, a Queen's Ambassador of the first class ; and in the House of Commons, at this moment, any allusion to Turkish atrocities is met by the cynical incredulity of Mr. Bourke, and received by the scornful murmurs of the supporters of the Government.\*

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\* The *Times*, in a leader of January 3, 1877, states the universal and undeniable opinion :—"Let anyone compare the work which Lord Salisbury has done at Constantinople, and the language he is holding there, with the speeches of Lord Beaconsfield, or even with the earlier despatches of Lord Derby, and then say whether or not there has been a change of policy. In fact, the critics of the Government may justly say that it is their policy which prevailed, and that by accepting it the Government have made friends with the nation."

We may admit that up to the time when the Government rejected the Berlin Memorandum, and followed up the refusal by sending the fleet to Besika Bay, they had pursued a clear and consistent course. Lord Derby had taken his stand on the Treaty of Paris, the independence of the Porte, the inviolable right of Turkey to settle her internal economy, vicious as it was, in her own way. He said as late as June 26th, 1876 : —\*

“ We would gladly reconcile, if we could, the Porte and its insurgent provinces ; but we have, as I consider, no right and no wish to take part with one against the other in a purely internal quarrel.”

There is not a shadow of a doubt that it was on this basis, and for the purpose of sustaining this policy by a physical as well as a moral demonstration, that the Berlin Memorandum was curtly dismissed, and the magnificent fleet of England was ostentatiously moved up to the entrance of the Dardanelles. Mr. Disraeli admitted as much. With an odd, cynical contempt of his colleague, and of the dignity of a great office, he said with regard to Lord Derby's explanation of the movements of the fleet : “ No one with the papers before him can doubt that the statement of Lord Derby is *accurate as far as it goes.*” And then, after stating that Sir Henry Elliot did not entertain those fears about dangers to the foreigners in Turkey that had been felt by other embassies, he declared that

“ The policy of England has ever been that the Mediterranean Sea should be considered as one of the great highways of our Indian Empire, and we have always held, and do hold it, that *the waters of*

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\* Hansard, ccxxx. 416.

*that sea; and all the waters connected with it, should be free and secure.*  
 . . . . . We could not and we never attempted to conceal that we had in that part of the world great interests which we must protect and never relinquish, and it was no threat to any particular Power that we said at such a moment that the Mediterranean fleet, which is the guarantee and symbol of our authority, should be there, that the world should know, whatever might happen, *there should be no great change in the distribution of territories in that part of the world without the knowledge and consent of England."*

I shall have a word to say directly about this avowed policy of the Ministry : a policy which, it may hardly be doubted, is their policy of to-day. But when a Premier of England, speaking on behalf of an English Ministry, tells us that a solemn declaration of his Foreign Secretary is "accurate as far as it goes," we who are interested in the honour and dignity of our statesmanship, and who hold in the highest esteem the character of Lord Derby, turn anxiously to his statement to see how "far it goes." What were the circumstances in which it was made? What was the impression it carried to the public mind? And if there was, as is implied by the Premier, a reservation in the confessions of his colleague, what is there to excuse that reservation?

The circumstances were these. On the 14th of July, 1876, a deputation waited on Lord Derby at the Foreign Office, and presented a memorial. It expressed a hope that our Government would in no circumstances give any countenance to Turkish oppression. It used remarkable words in vindicating the duty of England to lend its moral support to a people striving to shake off an intolerable yoke, and it roundly denied that English interests demanded the cowardly subjection of



justice to policy.\* One of the speakers (Mr. Forsyth, M.P.), a Tory Member of Parliament, said :—

“It had been said that the Government, by refusing to join in the Berlin Memorandum and sending the fleet to Besika Bay, had ranged themselves on the side of Turkey.”

Lord Derby declared that a wrong construction had been put upon the movement of the fleet; he pointed to the apprehensions that had excited the European residents of Turkey as causing and justifying the movement; he concluded by saying: “I think you will admit that [these facts] do not admit of the inference which has popularly been drawn.”† Let us say nothing of the fact that this disavowal did not come until

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\* “We wish to express to your Lordships and to the Government our profound conviction that our country would not be justified, on any pretext, in upholding *even by its moral influence, far less by force of arms*, the Turkish authority in conflict with its revolted subjects. We could not acquit ourselves to our own conscience, or to the public opinion of the civilised world, if we who claim—and justly claim—to be the friends of religious and political freedom, were to use our power in helping to fasten on the necks of the oppressed subjects of the Porte a yoke which neither they nor their fathers were able to bear. We do not believe that Great Britain has any true and lasting interests to subserve by such an alliance with a cruel and immoral despotism as will make its name to be execrated by the millions of Christians in all parts of European Turkey.”

† “It was said that an apprehension was felt that we are prepared to take part in protecting Turkey, not only against external aggression, but also against internal dismemberment. With regard to the bringing up of the English fleet to Besika Bay—I may say this in passing—that it is an act upon which a construction has been put very different from that which would have been put if those who criticised it had followed out, step by step, the course of events which led to it.” After stating the facts, the apprehensions at Constantinople, the necessity agreed on by the ambassadors of “obtaining for unoffending persons, and as a security against dis-

weeks after all Europe had drawn what the Minister considered to be a wrong inference. It needed not the contemptuous frankness of Mr. Disraeli's avowal to give its just character to this extraordinary episode. It is fortunately an incident of rare occurrence in the history of English statesmanship.

But let us not forget—let not Europe forget—the momentous and arrogant proclamation of English policy made by the Premier of England. Let us not forget it, because if it be a true exposition of British policy, we shall have to maintain the prodigious assumption, at fearful cost and sacrifice. The waters of the Mediterranean Sea, and all the waters connected with it, are to be held free and secure for the British supremacy. Were there to be behind that most exalted arrogance any plea of justice, of generous protection, of broad humanity, or of beneficent civilisation, a people great and vigorous, under the impulse and enthusiasm of an unparalleled destiny, might brace its energies to maintain the sublime pretence! But what is the motive of this audacious monopoly? It is that the Mediterranean Sea may

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order, such armed force as it was possible to obtain," he said, "I think you will admit that [these facts] *do not admit of the inference which has popularly been drawn.*" And later on, in September, to a deputation of working-men, Lord Derby repeated his assertion: "Neither do I think that the English fleet ought to be withdrawn from Besika Bay. As I have explained again and again, it was brought there, together with the fleets of other nations, at the request of the British Minister, and to act as a check upon the fanaticism that might have arisen in the revolution that appeared impending when the Sultan was notoriously insane, and a change of Government was imminent."

be maintained as one of the great highways to our Indian Empire. Perish the ambitions, the rights, the civilisation, the progress, of great nations : stand still in perpetuity the development of powerful races : remain secure from the wrath of avenging justice the most inhuman of barbarisms : the interests of England demand that the Mediterranean, from Gibraltar to the Dardenelles, shall be an English lake ; that in the Bosphorus and Black Sea no fleet shall range except by leave of Britain ; that the Suez Canal and the Red Sea are leased to the maritime world only on the terms which her interests impose ! Against this imperial impudence I call on all Europe to protest. A principle so hateful, so Satanic, I ask the British people to disavow. It is indeed a signal conceit, that the nation which most rudely protests against the pretensions of Russia, advances claims to the dignity of a Colossus that bestrideth the world !

Let the English people remember that times have changed. We are no longer the nation that could face combined Europe. Vast powers have arisen out of the wrecks of little states, and to-day the language of Lord Beaconsfield excites only laughter and scorn. It is the coarsest and the most brainless policy to put forth such monstrous pretensions. "Live and let live," must be in future the motto of a kingdom that once ordered at its will the destinies of mankind. A nation that vents an arrogance so insane is challenging the repression of all the world. I protest again in the most solemn manner that our so-called "traditional policy" in

regard to Turkey and the Black Sea is both perilous and immoral. We have no right, if we had the power, to check the movement of Christians towards unity. Our claim to coop up the Russian navy in the Black Sea, whether by our own fleet or by backing up the Turkish fleet, is absurd and unprincipled. The only thing that can sustain it is might : but let us remember our own repeated advice to other nations, that might cannot justify a breach of right. Our pretence that we, a Christian and civilised nation, have a right to use force to cripple an advancing Power because of remote and indefinite possibilities of danger to our Empire, would, if really supported by public opinion in Great Britain, be a conspicuous demonstration of unprincipled selfishness, of hypocritical Christianity. When we act in concert with other Powers for the general good of Europe, and for the maintenance of high principles of justice and honour in and among nations, we may hope to be supported by the public opinion of the civilised world. But, to advance such claims as are put forth by the vapouring Bobadils of English chivalry, and dignify them with the delusive name of "British Interests," is to invite not only the contempt, but the forcible protest and negation of all the Great Powers. It is because I see that the time is coming when we must either eat these big words or make them good in the face of united Europe, that I ask every patriotic citizen, every man who believes righteousness to be the best basis of a nation's power, to see that they shall be disavowed.

What we find then is, that from the date in

July when Lord Derby made his profession of "strict neutrality" up to the time when Lord Salisbury, beaten by Turkish obstinacy, returned from Constantinople, several of Her Majesty's Ministers were assuring the country that the outburst of public feeling had their hearty sympathies;\* that they and the people of England were at one, and equally sound on this question;† that they were entitled, and meant, to demand reparation for the shocking outrages which had occurred;‡ that they would not only demand punishment and reparation but would insist upon effective guarantees;§ that "they had long known it was their duty—they accepted the duty—to fulfil the moral obligation into which this country entered by the Treaty of 1856 *to use its efforts to protect the Christians of the Turkish provinces from misgovernment*;"|| that they did not hold a doctrine of "absolute indifference" (though, by the way, they were pursuing a policy of "strict neutrality"—they were insisting on the "non-intervention of the Powers in the affairs of Turkey"), which was "not one this country ever has professed;" that having a great position, involving heavy responsibilities, we could not escape them; that we could not say "we never will intervene except when our own interests are touched;" the effect of

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\* See Lord Carnarvon, Appendix B.

† Chancellor of the Exchequer, Appendix B.

‡ See Lord Derby, Appendix B.; Sir S. Northcote, *ib.*; Lord Carnarvon, *ib.*

§ See Lord Derby, Appendix.

|| Sir Stafford Northcote at Edinburgh.

which would be *to leave the regulation of all international affairs to uncivilised nations.\**

These last words were uttered by Lord Derby. It is only characteristic of this present Ministry that we should be able to turn to an entirely opposite opinion expressed but a few days since by a colleague, Mr. Gathorne Hardy :—

“I will not hesitate to say, speaking as I am in an assembly of Her Majesty’s subjects, that nothing but the interests of the country itself can justify us in drawing the sword. We are not to draw the sword because our feelings are affected, but only in the interests of justice and right.” †

That is perhaps a small matter. We have become used to these Ministerial discrepancies. But Lord Derby’s words conveyed a meaning in principle exactly the reverse of the policy announced in the truculent speeches of the Prime Minister, *viz.* that our policy was a policy of English interests, with a bold implication that those were equivalent to the interests of mankind. And the British public, having faith in Lord Derby as a sober statesman, not given to dramatic poses and poetic exaggerations, understood by his words that the Ministry felt a responsibility—and would meet it—to use the moral and perhaps the material influence of this country on the side of humanity and civilisation.

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\* Lord Derby at the Foreign Office. For whom Sir Stafford Northcote vouches as follows : “ If he is not the man who will indulge himself in a great display of sentiment, depend upon it that he is not less the man who in the case of action will do that which sentiment demands.” (September 27, 1876.)

† Sir Stafford Northcote’s attempt to diminish the force of this declaration was singularly ineffective.

Not one of all these brilliant promises has been fulfilled! The reparation and punishment have scarcely affected to be undertaken—still less to be attained. The assumed right to demand them has not been vindicated. The effective guarantees were not only not obtained, but were actually dropped out of the last proposals made to the Porte. The duty accepted by the Ministry to use its efforts to protect the Christians was subordinated to the notion of the Ministry that the selfish interests of England were the interests of the universe. And lastly, through the feeble and shuffling tactics which came of this last principle, they have left to the two least civilised nations of Europe the settlement of this momentous issue. Their policy of Peace has exploded like a torpedo. And now, at the end of all the manœuvring, intriguing, hectoring, meddling, threatening, entreating, counselling, warning, sympathising, forgetting, proposing, withdrawing, promising, failing, protesting, omitting, protocolling, reserving, the net result is that the People of England have been disappointed and deceived, and if we really have any interests concerned we shall have to fight for them against the intrigues and the forces of Europe. This comes of having a double-faced Ministry. This comes of timorous, feeble, and hesitating statesmanship.

But to return. Looking at the record of diplomatic events which occurred before and up to the Conference—the efforts at mediation; the negotiations with the Porte for an armistice; the positive proposal by the Ministry, in September, of a plan inviting that joint

interference in Turkish affairs against which they had so often protested ; the half-hearted way in which this was pressed upon the Porte, without even a threat of suspension of diplomatic intercourse ; the hasty acceptance of the proposal of the six months' armistice, which was so obviously in the interest of Turkey—the conviction is strengthened and assured that, behind the sympathetic face which the Ministry turned to England, there was a harsher and more uncompromising countenance. There could be no possible consistency between a Ministry which, in regard to the momentous issues raised in South-Eastern Europe, starts from a basis of selfish policy, and vapours about the inviolable character of Treaties in one breath, and cries "Peace" and "Amelioration" in the next. Questions of treaties, everything ought to have given way before the prodigious urgency of the profounder questions that were hurrying to a solution.

The journey of Lord Salisbury to Constantinople is an event that future English historians will not recall with any national pride, though it is dignified by one circumstance, the gallantry of the noble Marquis, who, in a mission fore-doomed by the conditions imposed upon him by his colleagues, yet undertook to lead a forlorn hope. For all the generous work he did, for all his efforts to magnify his limited powers into some effective force, there will never be wanting men of any party to do him honour. If the matter had wholly lain in his hands, Britain would have shown that she is not without a Statesman who knows how to emerge from the narrowness of insular politics, and to see that



the true broad principle of the international action of a great nation is not that its interests are the interests of mankind, but that in vindicating and promoting the just government of neighbouring nations we are, along with the general interests of mankind, promoting our own. The announcement which Lord Derby says he made to all the Powers before he went into the Conference, that in no event would he commit Great Britain to any measures of coercion, has in it such indications of exasperating simplicity, that we are justified in the belief that Her Majesty's Government could never have hoped for success. The whole thing was a hollow and pretentious exhibition, which has cost us some thousands of pounds, and our influence in Europe. The result of it was, to leave Russia and Turkey more inflamed than ever, and to prove to all the other negotiators that England, which declined on the one side to take any serious responsibility, was willing on the other to assume the graver risk of an unsettled problem and a general war. Mr. Gathorne Hardy's weak argument, that combined coercion might have resulted in misunderstandings and hostilities, will not stand a moment before the terrible reality of the situation into which the policy of Her Majesty's Government has brought the nations of Europe. Consular commissions, notes, *pourparlers*, conferences, protocols, declarations, all hobbled by reservations, all neutralised by the perverse selfishness and isolated obstinacy of the Ministry, have left us Turkey, bankrupt, desperate, at bay before the enthusiast hordes of the Muscovite. They have cast the die. They have

lost the opportunity of creating friendly provinces in Slavic Turkey, and in Greece, and securing a permanent ally in Russia.

One criticism upon the Ministry is unanswerable. They say in effect that they never meant, they were not bound, to take any part in effective measures : that their policy was a policy of moral pressure, supported by negative menace. Well, let us say that was a reasonable policy—a policy which, on the whole, met the views of the British public. They were at least bound by their pledges to the country to two things : to use their pressure entirely in the direction of obtaining adequate guarantees, and failing in that, to withdraw, and leave the Porte to its fate. “Well,” they will now reply, “we have done so.” Yes! They have done so, when the Porte has had time to arm and prepare a formidable army ; when the public feeling against the Porte in this country has somewhat expended itself, and seems to be allayed. Had they declared when they refused to assent to the Berlin Memorandum that they would neither suggest nor intervene—that they would most certainly leave the Turk to his fate if he would not yield to the moderate and just demands of Europe, things would have been in no worse, and, indeed, must have been in a *better*, position than they are at this moment. They have since professed to assume the attitude they then declined to take ; and yet they say their policy has not changed !

As for the despatch to which the Ministry appeal to show that they had held over the head of the Porte the menace of abandonment, it is one of the most damning

proofs of their inconsistency. Here are Lord Derby's words:—

"In the course of the conversation with Musurus Pasha reported in my despatch of yesterday, I took the opportunity of suggesting to His Excellency that it would be undesirable that the Turkish Government should *misunderstand the attitude of Her Majesty's Government in regard to the proposals of the Berlin Conference*. Her Majesty's Government had declined to join in proposals which they thought ill-advised, but both the circumstances and the state of feeling in this country were very much changed since the Crimean war, and the Porte would be *unwise to be led*, by recollections of that period, to count upon *more than the moral support of Her Majesty's Government* in the event of no satisfactory solution of the present difficulties being found.

"I merely *suggested this in conversation, and carefully avoided pledging Her Majesty's Government to any line of policy.*"

This "suggestion in conversation"—this gentle warning that it would be unwise to count upon more than our "moral support"—this implied promise of that moral support, is what Lord Derby appeals to in order to show that the policy of Her Majesty's Ministers never changed! *Did it never change?* Was it always and consistently a blustering, meddlesome, do-it-if-you-dare policy to Europe; a policy of windy-wordy generosity and sympathy to the British people, and of "moral support" to the "unspeakable Turk?" If that were the Ministerial policy, we may admit upon the evidence it never changed! And at this moment we are in infinite and perilous darkness about the line of conduct they propose to pursue.

Who now has the heart to canvas or to criticise the undignified episode of the Protocol? Not that it ought, as the *Times* suggests, to be dismissed and for-

gotten. It is not the sort of thing any people ought to forget of their Government. From whatever point of view it is regarded, it was a senile performance. Either the Ministry was, as the Turkophilists say, the cat's-paw of Russia, or it wittingly took part in a pretentious farce. Few Englishmen can read the Protocol without feeling that it expresses in moderate terms the least which Europe had a right to demand. No Englishman can believe that when Lord Derby nullified it by his declaration, he was not stultifying himself and his colleagues, who had given the most solemn assurances that misgovernment in Turkey should cease, and that good government should be established under effective guarantees. No Englishman whatever can feel that British dignity and honour, or even British interests, were preserved in a transaction now admitted to have been devised, without an atom of real meaning, to cover the retreat of Russia from an unpleasant position !

Well, we are at the end of negotiation and at the beginning of war. The dispatching of documents is to be succeeded by the dispatch of men. The questions that are now arising to be settled are larger, broader, deeper, and proportionately more serious than those which at the outset of all these performances Her Majesty's Ministry had to treat. If the result of their handling of those restricted subjects has been but an impotent shuffle, what are we to expect of their treatment of the momentous circumstances soon to arise in Europe ? I have shown that they have exhibited, no matter what they intended, neither consistency, decision, nor force. Their policy, if it may be dignified

by the name, has been one of negative meddling. What is their policy now?

The latest utterance is enigmatic and doubtful. Lord Derby is uncertain whether the Treaty of 1856 is or is not to be a starting-point of action. I don't know with what feelings Englishmen, who would like to see their Government at such a critical juncture using language definite, strong, and pronounced—at all events coherent—will think of this:—

“The noble Earl spoke very strongly, and with great justice, upon the necessity of maintaining the integrity of Turkey, and went into the question as to whether the Porte has disentitled itself to claim execution of our treaty obligations. My answer to the noble Earl as far as I dissent from him, or rather as far as I feel bound to qualify what he has said, would be this, that no treaties can be or are intended to be eternal. They are framed with reference to existing circumstances, and though I do not say whether that is or is not the case in regard to the Treaty of 1856, yet nothing can be more probable in European diplomacy than the recognition of the fact that treaties do by the lapse of time and the force of events become obsolete. I do not think it would be a fair or satisfactory conclusion to come to either that you must be eternally bound by a treaty, made long ago under conditions wholly different from those now existing, or that you are to be held guilty of a breach of faith because you consider it to be no longer binding.”—*House of Lords, April 19, 1876.*

If it is gratifying to see that this statement has excited the singular fury of the Turkophilist organ, the *Pall Mall Gazette*, on the other hand, that vast majority of the people of England which neither reads nor regards the *Pall Mall Gazette*, must feel equally suspicious of the intentions of the Ministry. Will they do again as they have done before? They vindicated the sanctity of treaty obligations. They are now disposed to let them lie torpid. Who knows when,

and how suddenly, they may not galvanise them into life again? The Ministry has given pledges to the public, but what are we to hope for from their fickle and inconstant character?

Dicit: sed mulier cupido quod dicit amanti,  
In vento et rapida oportet scribere aqua.

Except to those few persons who have made a close, continuous, and accurate study of the whole of the events of this great diplomatic struggle, a struggle which has ended as ineptly as the tune in the Irish song:—

“The Piper, a pale-faced gossoon,  
Began to play ‘Eileen Aroon,’  
Until an arch wag  
Cut a hole in his bag,  
Which, alas! put an end to his tune,  
Too soon!  
And the music blew up to the moon:”

—I say, except to such students of events, it will be utterly incredible what numerous shifts, what signs of divergent opinion, what innumerable evidences of disagreement within the Ministry, are scattered over the whole series of speeches, documents, and transactions.

The gentle sympathies of the Chancellor of the Exchequer are corrected by the bold hardihood of the Secretary for War. The old-fashioned English love of brute force, which is dignified by its admirers under the name of “pluck,” finds its exponent in the First Lord of the Admiralty; the manly generosity of a chivalrous nature glows in the bosom of Lord Carnarvon; the cold insensibility of Lord Derby finds its foil in the knightly audacity of Lord Salisbury.

You may trace in the sayings of the Ministry an

earnest wish to interrupt, by force if needful, the tyranny of the Porte, alongside of an obstinate determination that the Ottoman Empire shall be maintained in the interests of England; or, again, the readiness to admit the obligation of England to vindicate the outraged laws of civilisation and humanity in a case where their breach is a standing menace to Europe, and acquiescence in that breach is an accessory crime; and, on the other hand, the protest that only when our own honour, dignity, and interests are concerned should we unsheath the sword. The same acts have been differently interpreted by different Ministers. The same outrages have been denounced or extenuated by men who profess to be one in policy and aims. The lofty principles asserted at one time, when popular opinion greedily demanded them, at another time were forgotten or ignored. It is a deplorable exhibition of saltimbanque statesmanship.

We have thought it necessary at this critical moment to call the attention of the country to the position of the Ministry. We can only end as we began. The Government has failed in everything it professed to attempt. The peace of Europe—already broken by one war—is threatened by another more formidable and tremendous. The sanctity of treaties has been ignored and evaded. Turkish independence and territorial integrity have been attacked in Conferences and Protocols wherein have conspicuously figured the names of Salisbury and Derby. Neither reparation nor punishment have followed the “denouncement” of Her August Majesty, or the florid invectives of her

Ministers. The "amelioration of the condition of the subjects of Turkey, Christian as well as Mohammedan," still remains only an ugly and impotent phrase. The dignity and honour of England we have wrapped up in the Protocol and Declaration, and swallowed with effects as bitter as the book in the Apocalypse. And in the prospect before us the interests of England, which were at one time those of humanity and justice, may become a question of vitality and empire.

No English Government since the days of Queen Anne has so stultified itself. No Government has ever promised more and done less. No Ministers have so blazed abroad their own glory to have it more completely extinguished by events. No Cabinet has so loudly boasted of spirited foreign policy with results so mean and confounding. No English Government has used to foreign Powers language so menacing and peremptory with such melancholy futility.

Two things only remain to be said. One concerns the members of the Ministry. Will Lord Salisbury and Lord Carnarvon, and their colleagues in the Cabinet, who have spoken and laboured so zealously against committing England to the task of supporting a corrupt and unrighteous Government, either insist on a bold and definite policy, in harmony with their known wishes and declared aims, or abandon a Cabinet which they cannot control? Grave, indeed, is their individual responsibility if they continue to be parties to the double-faced tactics of the last eighteen months.

The second is, will the people of this country forget the vows of last autumn, and endure, on any pretence



of interest or policy, to be dragged into a struggle for an unholy cause? Strong as is Lord Salisbury, there are symptoms in the words and in the tone of some representatives of the Ministry that anti-Russian and Mahommedan sympathies still live among them. The organs of the Government have never changed; as steadily and unscrupulously as ever they write up the unspeakable Turk. They still attempt, by every possible argument and every suggestive fact, to stir up in the minds of the people animosity, suspicion, hostility against Russia. Has the Ministry changed? Mr. Bourke read out, in the House of Commons, amid the ringing cheers of Conservative Members, the indecent despatches of Consul Holmes, with their sneers at Slavophiles and their ill-concealed Turkophilist optimism. There is a bold and evident pressure put upon the Government to return to our old "traditional policy," and to involve itself in a contest with Russia. Let the voice of every man who cares for the honour and dignity and interest of this great country be heard insisting that we shall not pursue a policy of selfish and unnatural jealousy; that on no account shall our fleets and armies be used, under a pretence of danger to our Empire, to bolster up a Government doomed to decay and perdition; and that our voice if uttered at all, that our arm if wielded at all, shall be uttered and wielded only in defence of just interests really endangered, and to promote the indisputable benefits of freedom, civilisation, and humanity.



# APPENDICES.

## APPENDIX A.

### VIRTUOUS SYMPATHIES AND GOOD INTENTIONS

#### v. BRITISH INTERESTS.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE AT  
EDINBURGH.

"I should like to say that the principle of the foreign policy of this country appears to me to be the policy of maintaining peace—peace, but still an honourable peace. We do not desire to maintain what might be called a coward peace—a peace founded merely on the fear that if we engaged in a struggle it might cost us our lives, or it might cost us money, or any other advantages that we now possess. That is not the peace that any nation which respects itself, or which desires to maintain a position in the face of the world, will ever desire to cultivate. Nor do we desire a selfish peace. We do not desire that England should remain at peace, and see other countries suffering all the horrors of war and ruin,—that, I say, is not a spirit which England will ever tolerate; that is not the spirit in which England will ever act; and it is not a spirit which is consistent with the principles on which England always desires to promote peace. The policy of Great Britain is peace, and it is peace on these principles: We desire the good government of all nations."

LORD BEACONSFIELD AT THE  
GUILDHALL,

November 9th, 1876.

"During these twelve months of anxiety and agitation, I would take this opportunity of stating what have been the two great objects which Her Majesty's Government have proposed with reference to those critical circumstances which have occurred. The first has been the maintenance of the general peace of Europe, which involves almost every other consideration that may affect the interests of this country, and the general welfare of humanity. We have believed that that peace would be best maintained by an observance of the treaties in which all the great Powers of Europe have joined. Those treaties are not antique and dusty obsolete documents. In this very capital the Treaty of Paris was revised. It was revised and re-enacted under circumstances which made that re-enactment most solemn, and that treaty lays it down *as the best security for the peace of Europe that we should maintain the independence and territorial integrity of the Turkish Empire.* That, then, has been our first object during the past year."

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE IN  
YORKSHIRE.

"We are confident, in the first place, in the good intention we have in this matter; we are conscious that we are animated by no selfish feelings, by no desire to promote that which may be called even merely national interests, but that in this matter we have at heart the good of England, and through England the good of the whole civilised world; and that we are not prepared to sacrifice the interests of those whose sufferings have so excited our feelings, for any fancied object or for any selfish personal interest."

LORD CARNARVON AT DUL-  
VERTON,

December 19th, 1876.

"He was satisfied that what any Englishman could do Lord Salisbury would do to secure reforms being granted to the subjects of the Porte in the revolting provinces: that he would take care that effectual guarantees were given, that those reforms should be true and effective: that they should not be, as they had been, false, wandering fires of the night, calculated not only to mislead, but to deceive; and also that in his every word and action he would adhere to the old form; that the interests and honour of the country he was charged to represent should receive no detriment."

## APPENDIX B.

### DETERMINED RESOLUTION *v.* LAVISH PROMISES.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE AT  
EDINBURGH.

"There may be questions about which it is difficult to know what England ought to do ; but this one thing I hope we shall never do, *we shall never use language which we are not at all events prepared to support.*"

LORD DERBY: *Working Men's Deputation, Sept. 11th, 1876.*

"As to the arrangements to be made, they must be dependent on the concerted action of all Europe, and so you will understand that the nature of them is not such as is possible for me to enter upon at present. For these unfortunate Bulgarians who have suffered so much, *they have no doubt a right to such reparation as it is now possible to make.* They have also the undoubted right to the *signal, conspicuous, and exemplary punishment of those who have been the offenders,* and I think they may also fairly claim, in one manner or the other, that *we should take steps such as will prevent the recurrence of similar actions.*"

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE,  
*Sept. 27th, 1876.*

"We demand—we have a right to demand—of the Turkish Government, that they should so far as now lies in their power, *make reparation for the frightful wrongs that have been committed.* Well, we must speak firmly and strongly on this point, and we must speak also for the punishment of those by whom these atrocities have been committed."

LORD CARNARVON AT DERBY,  
*October 3rd, 1876.*

"It was, however, the occasion for any member of the Government, when he found himself face to face

with a meeting of his countrymen at such a moment as this, to express his utter horror and detestation of the abominations of which they had lately heard so much. His heart-felt sympathy was with the unfortunate victims, and his earnest desire was that *punishment may fall on the offenders and that reparation may be made to those who have been sinned against*; and, more than all, that *those securities and guarantees may be obtained which may prevent the recurrence of such iniquities in future*, as well as that those *securities and guarantees may be as full and as ample as possible*. He rejoiced to believe that the heart of his countrymen beat as soundly as it did when such a tale of horror was reported."

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE.

"We must be strong—we must be materially strong—we must be morally strong. We must not only be materially and morally strong, but we must also be strong in the clearness of our convictions, and in knowing in our own minds what we are professing or promising. It may be that occasions may arise when it is impossible to speak everything that we mean, but this, at least, is important, that we should always mean what we speak. *Nothing can be more unjustifiable—nothing can be more detrimental, I will not say to the credit of the nation, but to the interest of humanity, than that we should be careless in using language which after all we do not intend to act up to.*"

LORD DERBY'S DESPATCH TO

SIR HENRY ELLIOT,

September 21st, 1876.

"The Porte cannot afford to contend with the public opinion of other countries, nor can it suppose that the Government of Great Britain, or any of the signatory powers of the Treaty of Paris, can show indifference to the sufferings of the Bulgarian peasantry under this outbreak of vindictive cruelty. No political consideration would justify the toleration of such acts: and one of the foremost conditions for the settlement of the questions now pending must be that *ample reparation shall be afforded to the sufferers, and their future security guaranteed. Your Excellency will, in the name of the Queen and Her Majesty's Government, call for reparation and justice. Your Excellency will likewise urge that striking examples should be made on the spot of those who have connived at or taken part in the atrocities.*"

## RESULT.

*Lord Derby to Lord Salisbury, November 24, 1876.*

"Sir H. Elliot executed these instructions on the 7th of October, and received from the Sultan every assurance that the measures called for by Her Majesty's Government, both for the relief of distress and for the punishment of the guilty, should be accomplished.

"It is with regret that Her Majesty's Government have learnt from the subsequent reports of Mr. Baring and Her Majesty's Consular Officers how little has been done to give effect to these assurances of the Sultan.

"Chefket Pasha has been retained in posts of honour, and although Achmet Aga has been at last arrested, his son, who is accused of being equally culpable, has been allowed to escape, and is in concealment among the Mussulmans.

"The Turkish authorities have only sent a sum of £7,000 for the rebuilding and repair of the villages, although the Turks themselves have estimated the amount required at £30,000; and at one place Ali Bey, a notorious fanatic and a participator in the outrages, has been appointed to superintend the works.

"Nothing whatever appears to have been done to restore the industries of the Christian population. From the reports which have reached Her Majesty's Government, it is doubtful how many of the eighty women have been restored to their homes. Sixty-eight women and children are stated to have been brought back to Batak, but others still remain in the hands of their captors, or are otherwise retained; and the efforts of the Pasha of Salonica to recover those who had been taken to that province have been impeded by the Mutessarif of Drama, and other subordinates.

"Instead of examples having been made on the spot, the inquiries of the Commission under Sadoullah Bey have been conducted at a distance from the scene of the principal outrages, and witnesses have had consequently to be summoned from a considerable distance, the proceedings being thus delayed, the effect of examples lost, and the ends of justice to a great extent frustrated.

"The conduct of the Commission has also been in many other respects most unsatisfactory; the few members of it who have shown any capacity for judicial investigation have been checked and hindered by the interruptions of their colleagues, and months after the massacre of hundreds of women and children, and of unarmed men, the Commissioners are still considering whether such murders are crimes."

## APPENDIX C.—THEIR POLICY HAS NOT CHANGED.

NO RIGHT TO INTERFERE *v.* INTERFERE BY RIGHT.

LORD DERBY.

"We would gladly reconcile, if we could, the Porte and its insurgent subjects; but we have, as I conceive, no right and no wish to take part with one against the other in a purely internal quarrel."

LORD DERBY,  
May 19, 1876.

"I have to point out to your Excellency that Her Majesty's Government have, since the outbreak of the insurrection in Bosnia and the Herzegovina, deprecated any diplomatic intervention of other Powers in the affairs of the Ottoman Porte." (Despatch to Sir H. Elliot, Turkey, No. 3, 1876, No. 278.)

LORD BEACONSFIELD AT AYLESBURY.

"What is the next step? Why, the next step is for Lord Derby to recur exactly to the position which he occupied *before the Servian war*. It was an attempt to settle, with the concurrence of all the Powers of Europe, the future relations that should subsist between the Christian subjects of the Porte and the Turkish Government."

LORD DERBY'S INSTRUCTIONS TO  
LORD SALISBURY.

"The immediate necessity of the situation is to restore tranquillity to the disturbed Provinces. The course of events has made it obvious that this can now only be done by concert with the Powers, and it is *in vain for the Porte to expect that the Powers will be satisfied with the mere general assurances which have already been so often given, and have proved to be so imperfectly executed*. If the Conference should decide upon a scheme of administration for these particular Provinces, which may be applicable and advantageous to other Provinces, it will be open to the Porte to extend it to them. No doubt the Conference will give due weight to the reforms already promulgated, which will properly form an important element for consideration, but pacification cannot be attained by Proclamations, and *the Powers have a right to demand, in the*



*interest of the peace of Europe, that they shall examine for themselves the measures required for the reform of the administration of the disturbed Provinces, and that adequate security shall be provided for carrying those measures into operation."*

PROTOCOL.

"If their hopes should once more be disappointed, and if the condition of the Christian subjects of the Sultan should not be improved in a manner to prevent the return of the complications which periodically disturb the East, they think it right to declare that such a state of affairs would be incompatible with their interests and those of Europe in general. In such case they reserve to themselves to consider in common as to the means which they may deem best fitted to secure the well-being of the Christian populations, and the interests of the general peace."

Done at London, March 31, 1877.

(Signed) DERBY.

DECLARATION MADE BY THE EARL OF DERBY BEFORE THE SIGNATURE OF THE PROTOCOL.

"The undersigned, Her Britannic Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, makes the following declaration in regard to the Protocol signed this day by the Plenipotentiaries of Great Britain, Germany, Austria-Hungary, France, Italy, and Russia:—

'Inasmuch as it is solely in the interests of European peace that Her Britannic Majesty's Government have consented to sign the Protocol proposed by that of Russia, it is understood beforehand that, in the event of the object proposed not being attained—namely, reciprocal disarmament on the part of Russia and Turkey, and peace between them—the Protocol in question shall be regarded as null and void.'

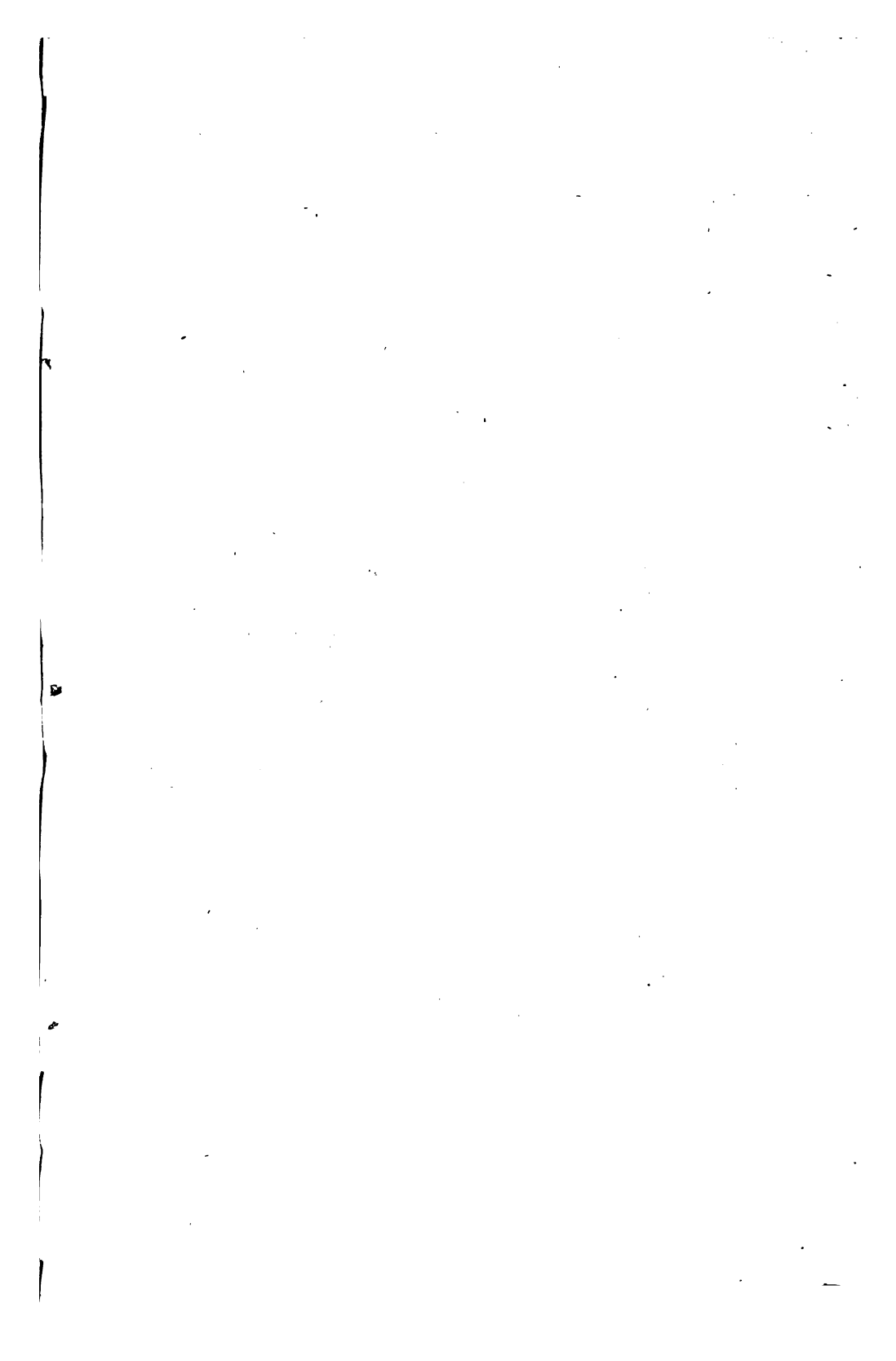
London, March 31, 1877.

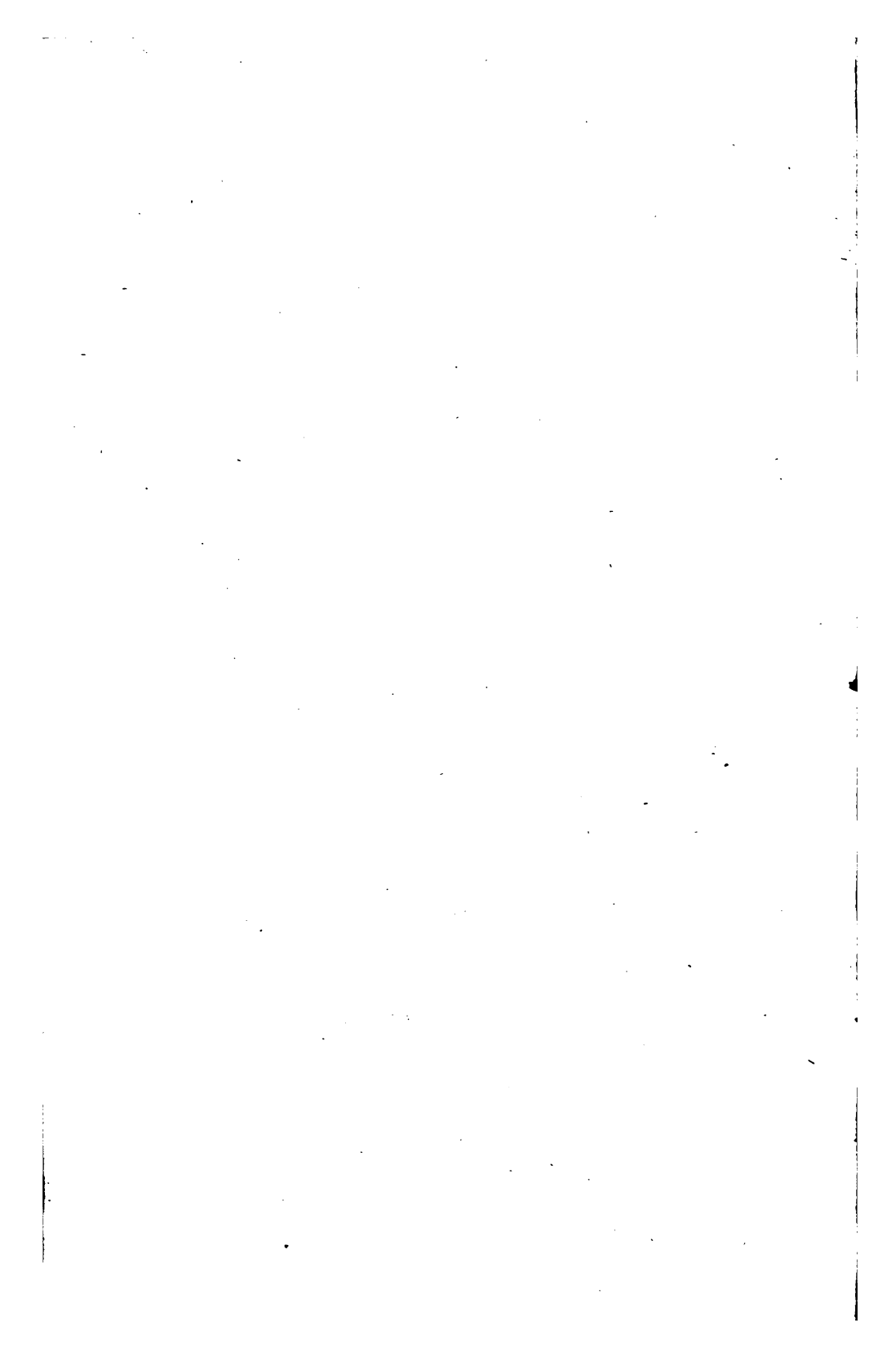
(Signed) DERBY.

## APPENDIX D.

### LORD DERBY AT THE FOREIGN OFFICE.

"That doctrine of absolute indifference is not one which this country has ever preferred, and I do not think it is one which would be popular with the nation at large. We have a great position in Europe, and with nations, as well as individuals, a great position involves heavy responsibilities, and we cannot absolutely decline to accept those responsibilities. If every nation which had reached a certain stage of civilisation were to adopt the principle of non-intervention in its absolute and concrete form, and say, 'We will never intervene in any international question except when our own interests are touched,' why, obviously, you can all see the effect of what it would be to leave the regulation of all international affairs to nations which have not reached that stage of civilisation."





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